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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet**

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6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

Current Functions

COMMERCE/TRADE/Specialty Stores

COMMERCE/TRADE/Specialty Stores

RELIGION/Religious Facility

RELIGION/Religious Facility

SOCIAL/Clubhouse

SOCIAL/Clubhouse

LANDSCAPE/Park

LANDSCAPE/Park

7. Description

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Located approximately two-and-a-half miles from Washington, D.C., Lyon Park is a residential neighborhood in central Arlington County, Virginia. Lyon Park is bounded by 10th Street North to the north, Arlington Boulevard to the east and south, and North Irving Street on the west, with Washington Boulevard and North Pershing Drive bisecting the community. Lyon Park was originally part of the growing community of Clarendon, but eventually became a separate residential neighborhood. In 1919, Frank Lyon subdivided the 300-acre tract that included property purchased by his former partner, Robert Moore, and platted as "Moore's Addition to Clarendon." Each of the original 1,200 building tracts measured approximately fifty-feet in width. At the center of the neighborhood, a parcel of land was set aside as parkland and the site of the community center. After the initial development in 1919, Frank Lyon continued expanding Lyon Park to the east, south, and west, with the final portion platted in 1951. Consequently, the Lyon Park Historic District occupies approximately 284 acres. The streets are mainly perpendicular, laid out in a grid pattern, with intermittent curvilinear streets near the central portion of the neighborhood. Many of the streets are devoid of sidewalks, although most of the lots have driveways and free standing garages.

Lyon Park is defined by a variety of architectural styles, ranging from Craftsman-style bungalows dating from the first decade of development to Colonial Revival-style buildings dating from the second quarter of the twentieth century. The domestic buildings in Lyon Park date from the 1890s to infill housing built at the turn of the twenty-first century and are

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constructed of both wood frame and masonry, although the latter dominates. The forms and styles include Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, Bungalow/Craftsman, Cape Cods, American Foursquare, and pre-fabricated kit houses. The Colonial Revival style dominates in Lyon Park and the neighborhood now contains one Arlington County's greatest concentrations of high-style suburban Colonial Revival buildings from the World War I to World War II period (1918–1945). These include single-family dwellings and garden apartment complexes, which are largely confined to Arlington Boulevard. Lyon Park is also home to two churches, a community house and park, and a commercial building core located along the intersection of North Pershing Drive and Washington Boulevard.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Development Prior to the Platting of Lyon Park (1900-1919)

The Queen Anne style was used in the construction of many of the first dwellings in Lyon Park. This style frequently drew on designs from pattern books and was favored for everything from rowhouses to sprawling seaside retreats. All were resplendent in patterned shingles, spindles, brackets, and curlicue cutouts; many boasted ample verandahs, turrets, and sleeping porches. During the latter part of the nineteenth century, the Queen Anne style found an exuberant expression in wood, and frequently incorporated columns and decorative motifs borrowed from our own colonial architecture. The traditional lavish architectural detailing of the Queen Anne style was easily diluted when only selected embellishments were applied. Often, the intricate form commonly associated with the Queen Anne style was the only identifiable element of the fashion. This vernacular interpretation of the style was distinctly prominent in Arlington County, particularly prior to the county's suburban transition in the twentieth century.

One of the most imposing, although vernacular, examples of the Queen Anne style noted in Lyon Park is the dwelling at 916 North Daniel Street, built in 1911. The dwelling exhibits the most common form documented in Arlington County, a rectangular form augmented by a second-story canted bay with an oversize pedimented gable. The wood-frame building is set upon a raised foundation with narrow weatherboard cladding. The façade, measuring two bays wide, has a wrap-around porch supported by Tuscan columns. Although Queen Anne in style, the

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building contains Colonial Revival elements such as a Palladian-like triple window and sidelights, stylistic elements popular at the time the house was constructed. Other Queen Anne-style examples erected prior to the platting of Lyon Park are 903 North Irving Street (1902), 2814 Washington Boulevard (1908), and 713 North Cleveland Street (1910).

Development of Lyon Park (1919-1953)

In the second quarter of the twentieth century, the period in which Lyon Park was actively being developed, traditional domestic forms were often interpreted for economy and convenience. The resulting bungalow mimicked the plan and massing traditionally associated with the fashionable Queen Anne style; yet, the bungalow form was invariably one to one-and-a-half stories in height. The bungalow is covered by a low-pitched, intersecting gable roof that encompassed the often wrapping porch. The irregular plan allowed for additional window openings and direct access to the porch from various secondary rooms. The modest arrangement of the wood-frame buildings made them one of the most popular low- to middle-income domestic forms in growing suburban communities like Lyon Park across the United States. The bungalow, very often adorned with elements of the Craftsman style, is one of the more dominant of the domestic forms in Lyon Park. Stylistic elements displayed in the community include rock-faced concrete block foundations, tapered Tuscan posts on masonry piers, full-width front porches, and paired window openings with three vertical lights in the upper sashes. As the popularity of the form was heightened during the second quarter of the twentieth century, the bungalow form of Arlington County was equally embellished with Queen Anne- and Colonial Revival-style detailing. This was noted throughout Lyon Park. Examples of the Craftsman/Bungalow can be seen at 813 North Cleveland Street (1920), 803 North Danville Street (1920), and 815 North Daniel Street (1925).

Another of the popular building forms of the early twentieth century was the American foursquare, commonly ornamented with Colonial Revival- and Craftsman-style detailing. At least six illustrations of the American foursquare exhibiting architectural detailing fashionable in the early part of the twentieth century have been documented in Lyon Park, especially along North Fillmore Street, North Cleveland Street, and North 3rd Street. The buildings have the characteristically distinguished two-story height, hipped or pyramidal roof with pronounced

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eaves and dormers that light an extra half-story, a large front porch, and a lack of ornate exterior details. The overall shape of the buildings is a cube, and the main entry openings are located off-center. Examples of the American foursquare form are located at 908 North Daniel Street (1920), 3113 North Pershing Drive (1924), 803 North Cleveland Street (1927) and 209 North Cleveland Street (1928).

One of the most common building practices in Lyon Park, and many other early-twentieth-century subdivisions in Arlington County, was the kit house or mail-order house. The largest, and by far the best known of the mail order companies was Sears, Roebuck and Company of Chicago, Illinois. The company began to design and sell house kits in the mid-1890s, and in its three decades of operation, Sears made a substantial contribution to twentieth-century housing in America. One of the reasons for the popularity of Sears houses was that they consciously reflected popular American tastes of the period. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, other companies offering architectural plans and kit houses emerged, including The Hodgson Company, Alladin Homes, Ray H. Bennett Lumber Company and Montgomery Ward. All shipping was done by rail, and due to the fact that Lyon Park was ideally located near several of the Washington and Old Dominion Railway stops, several mail-order houses could be easily delivered into the community.¹

Numerous genuine examples of mail-order and catalog houses have been documented in Arlington County, particularly in those communities located within close proximity to Washington, D.C. and the rail lines. Commonly, builders and real estate developers purchased a plan and proceeded to erect numerous examples of the building based on the original mail-order design. Consequently, positive identification of mail-order and catalog houses during a reconnaissance survey is nearly impossible. However, at least sixteen kit houses have been identified in Lyon Park.² These include examples from the Sears, Roebuck and Company such as the Whitehall (3006 North Pershing Drive, built circa 1920), the Mount Vernon (508 North Fillmore Street, built circa 1922), the Rembrandt (315 North Garfield Street, built circa 1925), the Elsmore (803 North Highland Street, built circa 1920), Americus (500 North Fillmore Street, built circa 1922) and the Vallonia (920 North Garfield Street, built circa 1922).

During the 1930s and 1940s, Lyon Park expanded southwest to its present borders. A surge in

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residential construction between 1933 and 1940 resulted in the addition of numerous brick Colonial Revival-style buildings on the neighborhood's remaining lots. This style, which borrowed heavily from early American architecture—particularly Georgian and Federal buildings—was largely an outgrowth of a nationwide pride in the past. In the early phase, the Colonial Revival style remained the exclusive domain of fashionable architectural firms and was favored for the large residences of wealthy clients. However, as the style spread to the suburbs and increased in popularity, the detailing and form became more modest and plain. The Colonial Revival style was quickly embraced by developers and architects to meet the housing needs of suburban Arlington County in the middle part of the twentieth century. The adaptation of the style to the middle-income housing of Lyon Park resulted in three-bay-wide rectangular wood-frame or brick structures with projecting porticos, cornice returns, open pediments, and Tuscan columns. The Colonial Revival-style dwellings of Lyon Park tend to be slightly smaller in scale and plan than those of neighboring communities. Another notable distinction is the reduced stylistic ornamentation, a trend that reflected the mass production of domestic dwellings to meet the growing housing needs of the nation's capital in the 1930s and 1940s. This more modest interpretation of the Colonial Revival style is particularly visible on 1st Place North, where the two-story brick dwellings are virtually identical in plan, form, massing, material, and have limited stylistic ornamentation. Examples are located at 2629 Washington Boulevard (1928), 723 North Highland Street (1933), and 3116 1st Place North (1940).

Similarly, the one-and-a-half-story "Cape Cod" cottages of the 1930s and 1940s exhibit the familiar detailing and form commonly associated with the Colonial Revival style. This form provided an adequate and affordable housing mode for the growing population of working- and middle-class residents of Arlington County, while mimicking the fashionable style of the period.

A popular form found throughout the neighborhood, the Cape Cod buildings are typically constructed of brick with side-gable roofs and front-gable dormers. The examples identified in Lyon Park typically have a central-passage plan. Detailing includes flat door surrounds with shallow Tuscan pilasters supporting a slightly projecting entablature, a corbeled brick cornice on the facade, and rectangular 6/6 double-hung, wood sash windows with brick sills. It was noted that in addition to the denticulated brick cornice, a carved panel was often applied over the main entry. Examples of Cape Cod dwellings are located at 3116 4th Street North (1920), 3009 2nd Street North (1935), and 3117 2nd Road North (1940).

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Lyon Park is also home to a substantial number of Tudor Revival-style dwellings. As with the Queen Anne and Colonial Revival styles, many of the Tudor Revival-style resources found in Lyon Park, and Arlington County as a whole, reflect the suburbanization of the style rather than the initial high-style expression. The distinguishing features in Lyon Park include multiple-gabled roofs, the placement of an exterior brick chimney on the façade, and steeply pitched front gables. Both wood frame and brick facing are found as cladding materials on these dwellings. Examples are located at 926 North Cleveland Street (1928), 2505 4th Street North (1928), and 3122 1st Road North (1940).

By the middle of the twentieth century, domestic buildings began to be constructed on a smaller scale with more modest detailing, as reflective of the housing trends of this period. The lack of detailing on many of the houses, apartments, and commercial buildings countywide allowed for quick inexpensive construction using readily available materials. Many of these buildings are vernacular in nature and do not represent a particular style. Typically, these buildings feature brick or stone facing on the facades and weatherboard or aluminum siding on the remaining elevations. Examples are found at 2926 1st Street North (1945), 926 North Edgewood Street (1945), and 2601 2nd Road North (1960).

Many of the dwellings within Lyon Park have freestanding garages and/or sheds. These structures are typically of wood-frame or brick construction, matching the construction material of the main dwelling. By the 1920s, the dwelling and the garage were being erected simultaneously. As the influence of the automobile grew, many dwellings began to be constructed with wood-frame or brick attached garages built to one side of the main structure or built belowground with a sloping driveway and a one-story room located above.

In addition to garages, there are a large number of sheds within the historic district. The shed, which is actually a catch-all term often applied to any storage or unidentified structure, is typically one story and constructed of wood frame or pre-fabricated metal. Although many of the properties have sheds, few of these are actually considered to be historic, most having been erected in the last quarter of the twentieth century. Other noted outbuildings include carports, gazebos, barbeque pits, guesthouses, playhouses and tree houses, and swimming pools.

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Multiple dwellings also make up a substantial part of the domestic housing stock in Lyon Park, particularly near the east and south boundaries of the neighborhood. Developed in the 1930s and 1940s, these multiple dwellings include both low-rise garden apartments and twin dwellings. Many of these multiple dwelling reference the Colonial Revival style as frequently seen in buildings that were constructed during the second quarter of the twentieth century. Constructed of brick in the Colonial Revival and modern styles, the apartment complexes typically stand two to three stories in height with flat roofs. Among those erected in Lyon Park are the Irving Apartments (1932), Sheffield Apartments (1942), Lee Gardens (1942, 1949), and Lee High (1943).

Apartment development within Arlington County between 1930-1954 was dominated by the garden apartment design, part of the Garden City movement popular during this period. The apartment buildings found along the borders of Lyon Park were constructed during this period and it is obvious that the Garden City movement had an effect on their design and site layout. The idea of the Garden City movement was to create residences overlooking natural greens and to provide citizens with above-standard housing. These rental developments within Arlington County fortified the county's transformation from "scattered farmsteads to village-like clusters and subdivisions."³ The garden apartment building is a structure that includes "halls or stairs used in common, which must be maintained throughout some kind or other of joint arrangement for service."⁴ The garden apartment complex "would be comprised of three or more two- or three-story buildings with a central entrance, no lobby, and no elevators, arranged together in a landscaped setting."⁵

Constructed in 1932, the Irving Apartment Building at 605 North Irving Street is an excellent example of a low-rise garden apartment building. The twelve-bay-wide brick building stands two stories in height on a raised foundation and has a flat roof with an ornamental parapet. Colonial Revival-style detailing is found at the entries, which have fluted pilasters and pedimented hoods with brackets, window openings, and enclosed end porches. Although the apartment building consists of a single structure rather than a complex of buildings like its neighboring counterparts, the Irving Apartment Building presents many of the same garden apartment elements. These include landscaped yards, off-street parking hidden from view, and paved walkways connecting the structures and leading to the public sidewalk.

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Another example of the influence of the Garden City movement on apartment buildings is Lee Gardens (1942, 1949), consisting of sixty-seven, three-story apartment buildings located on approximately thirty acres. It is located off Arlington Boulevard and 10th Street North. Washington, D.C. architect Mihran Mesrobian designed the buildings in a combination of Colonial Revival and Art Deco styles. The buildings are three stories tall with either hipped or flat roofs, and exhibit stone surrounds with broken pediments, corbeled cornices and large windows of glass blocks.

Public Structures in Lyon Park

In addition to the domestic architecture found throughout Lyon Park, there are also civic, religious, and commercial buildings. The residential neighborhood of Lyon Park was laid out around a central park consisting of two-and-a-half acres. A joint effort by the community, represented by the Lyon Park Community Association, and Lyon and Fitch, Inc. resulted in the construction of a community house along North Fillmore Street, on the northeast side of the park lot. The building was completed in 1925, and continues to serve the Lyon Park Community Association. The wood-frame building stands one-and-a-half stories in height on a masonry foundation. It is rectangular in form, and clad in weatherboard siding with a gabled roof. The building fronts onto North Fillmore Street with a pedimented entry at the center of the elevation.

A more prominent entry, sheltered by a portico with Tuscan posts, is located at the center of the north elevation facing the park. Colonial Revival in style, the building has Palladian-like windows, Tuscan posts, cornice returns, corner boards, and pedimented gables.

The Virginia Avenue Christian Church (3020 North Pershing Drive), constructed in 1927-1928, is currently occupied by Christ Church of Arlington. The prominent brick building is Tudor Revival in style with a crenellated corner tower, steeply pitched gables, lancet windows, limestone coping, and skintled brickwork. The building has a Greek cross plan, augmented by the square tower at the intersection of North Pershing Drive and Virginia Avenue. The semi-circular arched windows are sectioned by shallow buttresses that interrupt the projecting brick stringcourse.

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The Colonial Revival-style Temple Monte Sinai (3101 Arlington Boulevard) was built in the 1940s. The large brick building has a projecting front gable entrance, brick quoins, a cast concrete belt course and a wood cornice with returns.

Within each of the planned communities of Arlington County, smaller roads and streets that extended from the major routes into the neighborhoods were adapted for commercial use. This is particularly evident along Washington Boulevard and North Pershing Drive in Lyon Park. The purpose-built commercial buildings along these roads are one to two stories in height, constructed of brick and often clad with limestone. The larger commercial buildings, like those seen at 2626-2632 and 2645-2649 North Pershing Drive (1920), were divided into smaller, individual stores. Each store had its own entry and storefront window openings for display purposes. The second floors were generally utilized as apartments with a single-entry opening inconspicuously set in the end bay of the facades. Several of the original storefront buildings remain standing today, including the two-story buildings on the northeast and southeast corners. The perimeters of the neighborhood have since been intruded upon by commercial development that is concentrated near Arlington Boulevard and 10th Street North. The more modern commercial development dates from the latter part of the twentieth century, and includes offices, a hotel, and fast food restaurants and stores that cater more to the automobile traffic bisecting the residential neighborhood than to the pedestrians. Accordingly, these modern establishments are surrounded by large parking lots.

Constructed between 1936-1945, Whitey's Restaurant at 2761 Washington Boulevard adjoins the more imposing commercial building at 2645-2649 North Pershing Drive. One of the most recognized buildings in the community for its occupants rather than architectural style or scale, Whitey's Restaurant occupies one of two individual storefronts within a single brick structure. The projecting storefronts overshadow the applied architectural elements displayed in the limestone cladding, including the fluted pilasters, medallions, Tuscan pilasters, and swags. Storefront windows with fixed panes of glass and awnings flank the central entries.

Development After 1953

Lyon Park experienced little construction after the middle of the twentieth century as residential

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buildings had improved most of the interior lots by this time. A few of the remaining unimproved lots, however, have subsequently had single-family residences built on them in the last quarter of the twentieth century. For the most part these new dwellings are built in styles compatible with the historic housing stock seen throughout Lyon Park.

Arlington Boulevard and 10th Street North, major transportation corridors through Arlington County, bound the Lyon Park community on the north, east, and south. As such, modern commercial development along these routes provides services to the neighborhood and passing automobile traffic. These modern commercial establishments, as well as the multiple-family development that dates to the latter part of the twentieth century, do not contribute to the context of the historic district. Located along the edge of the boundary, they are not recommended for inclusion in the proposed district.

Endnotes

¹ Katherine Cole Stevenson and H. Ward Jandl, *Houses by Mail: A Guide to Houses from Sears, Roebuck and Company*, (Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1986), pp.19-30; Aladdin “*Built in a Day*” *House Catalog, 1917: The Aladdin Company*, (New York, NY: Dover Publications, Inc., 1995), passim.

² Kathy Holt Springston, “Sears Houses of Arlington,” unpublished brochure.

³ C.B. Rose, Jr., *Arlington County, Virginia: A History* (Baltimore, MD: Port City Press, 1976), p.176.

⁴ Henry Wright, “The Modern Apartment House,” *The Architectural Record*, Vol. 65, No. 3, p.213.

⁵ James Goode, *Best Addresses*, (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Press, 1988), p.3